

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1247

As Reported By House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to veterans' exemptions from higher education tuition and fees.

Brief Description: Extending veterans' exemptions from higher education tuition.

Sponsors: Representatives Dunn, Kenney, Carlson, Lantz, Radcliff, Gombosky, Esser, Edmonds, Ogden, Pennington, O'Brien, D. Schmidt, Poulsen, Conway, Stensen, Koster, Campbell and Fortunato.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/5/99, 2/9/99 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Eliminates the June 30, 1999, expiration date for the exemption from tuition increases for Vietnam veterans.
- Eliminates the June 30, 1999, expiration date for the exemption from tuition increases for Persian Gulf veterans.
- Encourages technical colleges to provide the two veteran waivers.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Carlson, Republican Co-Chair; Kenney, Democratic Co-Chair; Lantz, Democratic Vice Chair; Radcliff, Republican Vice Chair; Dunn; Edmonds; Esser and Gombosky.

Staff: Sherie Story (786-7120).

Background:

The governing boards of the state's public higher education institutions may exempt veterans of the Vietnam conflict, who served in Southeast Asia, from all or a portion of increases in student tuition and fees that occur after October 1, 1977. To qualify for the exemption, the veteran must be a resident student and must have served in Southeast Asia during the time period between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975. Currently, the expiration date for this tuition exemption is June 30, 1999.

The governing boards of the state's public higher education institutions may exempt veterans of the Persian Gulf combat zone from all or a portion of increases in tuition and fees that occur after the 1990-91 academic year. To qualify for the exemption, the veteran must have qualified as a resident student if enrolled as a student on August 1, 1990. The veteran also must have served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States during any portion of 1991 in the Persian Gulf combat zone. Currently, the expiration date for this tuition exemption is June 30, 1999.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The June 30, 1999, expiration date is eliminated for the exemption from tuition increases for Vietnam veterans. The June 30, 1999, expiration date is eliminated for the exemption from tuition increases for Persian Gulf veterans. The state's technical colleges are encouraged to provide the two veteran tuition increase exemptions to their students.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Washington's technical colleges are encouraged to provide the two veteran tuition increase exemptions to their students.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 4, 1999.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: (Original bill) We should do whatever we can to honor those who have served our country in the armed forces, especially in combat. The Veterans Legislative Coalition strongly supports HB 1247 as a way to assist veterans in furthering their education. Because many veterans choose to obtain technical training, we request that the state's five technical colleges be added to the program.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative James Dunn (prime sponsor); David Harris, Veterans Legislative Coalition; and Dennis Primoli, Veterans Legislative Coalition.